

2004 ANNUAL REPORT

CITY OF ST. CHARLES — ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

Mayor Susan L. Klinkhamer



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City of St. Charles, IL
Economic Development Dept.
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Understanding Our Past Helps Us Shape Our Future

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*We cannot have
a healthy
perspective
of the future,
unless we take
a step back,
appreciate
where we
have been and
admire how far
we have come.*

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Mayor Susan L. Klinkhamer
City of St. Charles, Illinois

The City of St. Charles Economic Development Department (EDD)

began operation in Jan. of 1998. The past 7 years has brought significant growth to the St. Charles business community. St. Charles is known as one of Chicagoland's premiere communities, having earned a strong reputation for quality municipal services, low utility costs, and accessibility to a wide range of national markets. St. Charles remains a logical choice for businesses: we're ranked 19th in the state for the number of manufacturing employers and noted as the 19th largest suburban retail market for total sales.

Growth-Assessed Property Values

1992-1997	1998-2003	% Change
\$50,161,973	\$106,098,315	111.5%

Fifty years ago, the population of St. Charles consisted of 7,716 residents. The 2003 special census counted almost 32,000 residents with 17,000 of a working age (16+ years), and the City is home to over 23,000 jobs — an illustration that we import many workers to our 1600+ businesses. With the location of the Pheasant Run Resort/Spa and 9 additional hotels, Charlestowne Mall, the DuPage County Airport, the Kane County Fairgrounds, and the Q Center (see related story, p.7) — St. Charles remains a destination for work and play!

The 100,000+ that visit our Scarecrow Festival each fall are just the start! We're a destination for business training and small conventions with the Advanced Center for Training, the Q Center, and now we welcome the new 25,000 square foot (s.f.) DuPage Expo Center which is currently undergoing the final phases of construction across the street from Pheasant Run Resort/Spa (4051 E. Main St).

In a time when many suburban shopping markets are seeing a decrease in sales tax revenue due to the construction of stores in other communities,



DuPage Expo Center
4050 E. Main Street

St. Charles has continued to see a modest increase. The City no longer enjoys the double-digit increases experienced for 20 years straight from 1975 on, however, our business community continues strong, even through the recent recession. This year's *Annual Report* recaps the year 2004, plus provides statistics on business activity for the past 7 years.

Development News

Office Expansion

In 2004, 42 new office/medical businesses opened in St. Charles. Demand for office space remained strong throughout the year. A total of 58 requests for information regarding office space were made to the City's EDD in 2004. These inquiries were from both new business ventures and existing businesses wishing to stay and relocate or expand in St. Charles.

Though St. Charles is not the county seat, the activity in the government sector was notable this year. The Tri-City Dispatch Center (Tri-Com) is being built on the City's west side, plus these agencies opened office space in St. Charles this year: General Services Administration, USDA, US Marine Recruiting Office, and the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers. Some businesses expanding with relocations from within St. Charles are the accounting firm DiGiovine, Hnilo, Jordan, & Johnson; Fitzgerald & Perry Law Office; Level Ten; Prairie Steel Construction; Press Republican News; Scholastic; and Wine Sergi Insurance.

Office space needs are being met by both renovation of existing buildings and construction of new buildings:

Continued on p. 2

Economic Activity, 2004

Continued from p. 1

The three buildings known as the North Avenue Business Park were left vacant in 2003 with the departure of Arthur Andersen. But in 2004, two buildings sold and each is filling with tenants, including:

- Allstate Insurance
- American Office Products
- First Choice Bank
- Fitzgerald and Perry Law Offices
- Fox Valley Chiropractic
- J.C. Olson
- Kids Hope United
- LK LLC (a local developer)
- Manpower
- Spare Wheels

Rated as Class A office buildings, the two office buildings which comprise Triad's St. Charles Executive Center on Foxfield Rd continue to attract new tenants. In the 2570 Foxfield building, 9,903 s.f. remains to be leased on the 3rd floor; this space is already built-out. In the 2580 Foxfield building, 13,118 s.f. on the 3rd floor is available and ready for a build-to-suit tenant.

At the intersection of Illinois and 5th Avenues (IL Rt 25), the *Heritage Square* project is an admired addition to our downtown. Phase Two at 405 Illinois Ave has added 6,923 s.f. of office space. Three units ranging from 1,450-1,590 s.f. are available for lease.

71,239 s.f. has been leased at the *Wind Hill Office Park* at 2315-2325 Dean; units ranging from 1,227-3,500 s.f. remain available.

The Courtyards of St. Charles at 451 Dunham Rd expects completion in the Spring of 2005 and will add 37,643 s.f. of new office space.

Office condominiums will be built at the *Tyler & IL Rt. 64 Business Park* behind the new Cadillac Dealership, and are expected to sell quickly. The first building is currently underway (17,550 s.f. office).

The Leroy Oaks Business Park, located on 6 acres on Dean St, just west of Randall Rd will be home to 64,515 leasable s.f. in 4 buildings. The first building of 17,069 s.f. will be available in Spring 2005.

The 3755 E. Main building was purchased in 2004 by local developer Wickman Properties. The Republican Press has recently moved into this building, joining Accenture, and the St. Charles Chamber of Commerce will relocate to this building in 2005. 1,200-18,000 of flexible space available for sale or lease.

For leasing or purchase information on these and other office buildings in St. Charles, visit the EDD on the web at www.stcharlesil.gov/edd for searchable listings.

Banks & Financial Institutions

St. Charles is well served by the Financial Community with 41 banks serving our community. Most recently, Benchmark Bank has begun construction at 3340 W. Main St. Added this year include:

- American Bank & Trust
- Charter One Branch
- Elgin Financial Services (EFS)
- First Choice
- LaSalle Bank
- Washington Mutual
- World Savings

Other financial institutions that opened this year are:

- Countrywide Home Loans
- GMAC Mortgage
- Home Point Mortgage
- Midwest Community Bank
- St. Charles Financial Services

Welcome to St. Charles!

Real Estate News

The real estate industry continues to be attracted to St. Charles. Kettley Realty relocated to 203 W. Main St, and new to St. Charles are: Baird & Warner, Keller Williams Fox Valley, Avondale Custom Homes, Vintage Appraisal, and Evergreen Real Estate.

Retail Growth

Although St. Charles experienced a net loss of 10 retailers in 2004, retail activity remained strong with an investment of approximately \$6.3 million. Most notable was the opening of Butera Market (2732 E. Main St) & La Huerta (580 S. Randall) grocery stores.



Foxfield Commons was home to 4 new businesses this year. Butera Market was the most notable.

New St. Charles retailers included Bella Bridal & Formal Wear, E-musical Gifts, Factory Card Outlet, Flooring Design Specialist, J-Link Merchandise Group, KaBloom, La Vita Cigar, Omega Flooring, Tuesday Morning, The Cottage Stamper, and Victory Collectibles. *For a full list of these and other St. Charles businesses visit www.stcharlesil.gov - business listings.*

Welcome to St. Charles!

Significant renovations and/or additions to existing businesses included Wal-Mart's addition of a stock room and seasonal area; Fox River Tire's relocation from Randall/64 to 20 N. 17th St; Sav Way Liquors' general remodeling; addition of a drive-through pharmacy service at Jewel Osco (Prairie St location); and Meijer's remodeled interior space for their regional office.

Construction and interest on our west side remained strong in 2004. At the Tri-City Shopping Center (IL Rt 38/Lincoln Hwy and Randall Rd), Taco Bell moved into their new restaurant and Suburban Tire has begun construction at their new facility. 7-Eleven

2004 BUSINESS ACTIVITY

Type of Activity	West Gateway	Downtown	East Commercial	East Industrial	Total
New Businesses	32	23	29	30	114
Closed Businesses	15	16	28	11	70
NET NEW BUSINESSES	17	7	1	19	44

moved to a neighboring site at 51 S. Randall Rd in preparation for the Randall Rd/Rt 64 road widening project.

Congratulations to Xsport Fitness (formerly PowerHouse Gym), Sportsplex of St. Charles, and St. Charles Gymnastics on their expansions!

The Petkas property and a portion of the Hahn properties (NW corner of Randall Rd and Rt 64) were sold this year, as was the Hines Lumber and Seigles Lumber yard. We were sorry to lose Payline West after a suitable location could not be found for them.

The City was concerned in 2003 when General Mills left the City after 36 years of operation, yet, the property was sold 5 months later. The bulk of the building is operated as warehouse by the Jacobsen Companies, and the front 5 acres has now been approved for the *West Towne Market*. Three new buildings of retail are planned for a total of 49,000 s.f. One building will be designated for mixed use retail, the other a free-standing building with a drive-through, and the third will be a 2-story professional retail or office use building. Construction will begin in the Spring of 2005.



*West Towne Market (rendering)
(former General Mills location)*

St. Charles is known as a community for dining! New in 2004 were:

- Badda Ben's Pizza
- Beef O'Brady
- Carnival Snacks
- Coldstone Creamery
- East Side Pub & Grill
- Gold Coast Dogs
- Jimmy John's
- La Tostada
- Mr. Miyaki
- Quizno's Classic Subs (2 locations)
- Taqueria Burrito Shack
- Third Street Cucina

Other restaurants that changed their name include:

- The Trophy Room at Hotel Baker to Waterfront Restaurant
- Baker's Wife to Harvest Restaurant
- 18 North to 18 Esperienza
- Sushi Bar to Sushi Yama
- Your Italian Marketplace to Gaetano Cafe & Deli

The City of St. Charles Historic Preservation Commission recently awarded to the new owners of the 208 W. Main building a Facade Improvement Grant in the amount of \$150,000. This is the first project to be funded by the new Blighted Commercial Building Facade Program. In addition to the overall exterior facade improvements, the entire interior of the building has been gutted with the upper floor to be renovated for housing and the lower for commercial. For more information on Historic Preservation and the Facade Improvement Program contact the Community Development Department at (630) 377-4443.



208 W. Main Street

As mentioned, the 3755 E Main St building was purchased in 2004 by local developer Wickman Properties. The front of the building was remodeled in preparation for 13,000 s.f. of retail use.

Industrial Focus

A balanced economy means more than just retail opportunities for area residents. Besides creating jobs, industrial businesses purchase local goods and services and are an important customer for the City's electric utility – the constant demand they require to run their businesses allows the City to negotiate for better bulk power rates, keeping rates low for everyone. The City welcomed and assisted 11 new businesses and 10 expansions in the industrial category in 2004.

Charlestown Power Equipment and Compact Industries were the largest industrial projects this year (see related stories, pp. 6 and 14).

Developers continue to meet the need for industrial space by providing affordable property. Construction of condominium flex space continued at a good pace in the City with 23 units filled by new and/or expanding tenants; much of this space is on the City's east side on Wallace and Sidwell. Construction is underway for additional buildings at 602 Sidwell Ct, 1515 Wallace Ave, and ten new condo units at 3540 Stern. On the west side, Mustang Construction broke ground on the 5th multi-tenant building in the Foundry Business Park as the first 4 buildings filled. In the new building will be 32 units for lease, starting at 2,000 s.f. and up.

Utilities Rates are Key to Business Location

The City's utilities are operated as "Enterprise Funds," an account designed to finance and operate the services similar to private business enterprises. The costs of providing the services are funded and recovered primarily through user fees. The City does not make a profit by providing utilities and only utilizes fees to cover administrative and operational costs. The following chart details utility rate adjustments planned by the City.

Planned Municipal Utility Rate Increases(+) and Decreases(-)			
Fiscal Year	Electric	Water	Sewer
03/04	0%	-5%	0%
04/05	+3%	-5%	+3%
05/06	+3%	0%	+3%
06/07	+3%	0%	+3%

Electric Service Reliability and Desirable Rates

One of the key reasons St. Charles is home to so many manufacturers is the City's operation of its own electric utility. The reliability of the St. Charles electric service is among the highest in the state. The electric rates are approximately 18% below the surrounding area served by an investor owned utility. Long-range price stability was assured by a long-term power purchase contract signed in June 2004 with the Illinois Municipal Electric Agency. This 30-year contract provides generation capacity to the City and will act as an insulator against market price fluctuations. For more information, contact the Electric Department at (630) 377-4407.

3rd Year of Expansion for Krause Racing

Since locating in St. Charles in 1987, Krause Racing has continued to evolve into the world of motorcross racing. The Sidewinder Products Division has brought innovation and enhancement to the design of off-road sprockets and chain technology. Using revolutionary materials, such as aircraft alloy, titanium, and aluminum, the Sidewinder Division has created sprockets with improved performance and duration, making the old steel sprockets unpopular and obsolete. The new "tri-metal" sprocket has expanded Krause Racing products into the street motorcycle market. Also new initiatives are currently underway to expand the tri-metal sprocket to the sprint car and go-kart market segments. These refinement efforts have created a high demand for Sidewinder sprockets causing Krause Racing's growth. They have expanded their facilities at 601 Sidwell Ct every year for the past three years. Due to the company's many successes in 2004, a market survey was conducted by the most prestigious group of publications in the off-road industry, which proclaimed the Sidewinder sprocket as #1 in the industry. For more information, call (630) 513-1000 or www.sidewindersprockets.com.

Zoning maps are available in the Utility Billing Office for \$5 or by calling (630) 377-4426.

Zoning & Building Code Changes

Public Information Meetings to be Held on New Zoning Ordinance

The current St. Charles Zoning Ordinance was first enacted in 1960. Throughout the years, the City Council enacted many amendments to adapt to changing needs and policies. After years of piecemeal changes, the ordinance is difficult to use and does not consistently require the level of quality that the community expects. The development of the new Zoning Ordinance is essential to satisfy the needs and desires of the St. Charles community and its citizens.

The City Council formed a special Zoning Commission comprised of citizens, representatives from the private sector, and various boards, all of whom utilize the Zoning Ordinance. In the past year, the Zoning Commission, in conjunction with consultant Camiros Ltd. and City staff, have prepared a draft of the new Zoning Ordinance for review and public hearings.

The second draft is currently available on the City's web site at www.stcharlesil.gov via the Community Development link. A third draft and a proposed map should be available by the end of January 2005. The new map will identify all new zoning districts. Some of the key objectives of the new Ordinance are to preserve the character of St. Charles, enhance the aesthetic appeal of the City through additional landscaping requirements, and ensure quality of new developments.

Tentative public hearing dates and forums to review the new Zoning Ordinance are expected in early 2005. Access the City's web site at www.stcharlesil.gov for additional updates. For more information, contact Senior Planner Rita Tungare at (630) 377-4443.

International Building Code (IBC) Adopted

The St. Charles Building and Fire Departments have recognized and implemented the Building Officials and Code Administrators (BOCA) National Building Code for many years. This code provides minimum standards to insure public safety, health, and welfare insofar as they are affected by building construction and to secure properties from any hazardous incidents. The code states regulations in terms of measured performance rather than rigid specification of materials, which makes the acceptance of new materials and construction methods possible without adopting cumbersome amendments for each variable condition.

St. Charles updated its building codes by adopting the 2003 edition of the International Building Code (IBC) in July 2004. In adopting the 2003 IBC, the City amended some of its provisions; these "local amendments" are available on the City website at www.stcharlesil.gov/codebook/title-15/t15-ch04.html. Important highlights of the new regulations include:

- Provides performance guidelines (15) for high hazard uses in the City;
- Provides performance guidelines (23) for above ground tanks located outside above grade for storage of flammable or combustible liquids;
- Provides for the requirement of an automatic fire suppression system (sprinklers) throughout every story and basement of all buildings subject to code.

For more information on the IBC regulations, contact the Fire Prevention Bureau at (630) 377-4457.

2004 Square Footage of NEW Buildings and Construction Cost

Use Type	East Gateway		Downtown		West Gateway		Total	
	Square Feet	Value	Square Feet	Value	Square Feet	Value	Square Feet	Value
Industrial - Whse	151,894	5,267,204	0	0	76,649	2,300,000	228,543	7,567,204
Office	69,693	3,656,800	9,061	700,000	23,064	3,650,000	101,818	8,006,000
Retail-Restaurant	20,870	2,500,000	0	0	3,000	400,000	23,870	2,900,000
Service	8,000	900,000	0	0	9,545	900,000	17,545	1,800,000
TOTAL	250,457	\$12,324,004	9,061	\$700,000	112,258	\$7,250,000	371,776	\$20,274,004

Public Works Project Updates

The City Public Works Department is working collaboratively with the Kane County Department of Transportation (KDOT) and the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) on several projects to improve traffic flow throughout the City. All projects will also include any needed upgrades to the local sewer, water, and electric systems. These remaining projects are dependent upon the State and County budgets and timing is subject to change. Projects which will impact the business community are:

IL Rt 64 Widening Projects

Two widening projects on IL Rt 64 are currently active: widening to 6 lanes from IL Rt 59 to Kautz Rd, and the construction of a center turn lane from 7th Ave to Dunham

Rd as IL Rt 64 (Main St) is a State route, both projects are being funded by the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT). Unfortunately, both projects have been delayed again due to the lack of State funding. Currently these projects are funded for construction in 2010. Work continues on the engineering so that the construction drawings will be ready when funding becomes available.

Randall Road Widening (from Dean to Oak Street)

Randall Rd is a County route and this project is being handled by the Kane County Department of Transportation (KCDOT).

The project will widen Randall Rd to a 6-lane section, 3-lanes in each direction from Dean St to Oak St. In conjunction with the widening project, the intersection at Randall Rd & IL Rt. 64/Main St. will receive major upgrades such as dual left turn lanes and right turn lanes on all legs of the intersection. The County advises that construction will begin in 2005. It is likely that two construction seasons will be necessary to complete the project.

Red Gate Bridge

The City is proceeding with the preliminary phase-one engineering for a river crossing, located between the intersection of IL Rt 31 and Red Gate Rd, extending easterly across the river and intersecting at IL Rt 25, just south of Pinelands Rd. The phase-one study will take approximately two years for approval. Then, phase-two engineering will produce actual final construction drawings from which the project will be built. It is too early in the project to predict a construction start date.

Water & Wastewater Treatment Facilities

The City continues its proactive approach to reinvest in and improve our water and wastewater infrastructure. Improvements at the Fox River Wastewater Treatment Facility are scheduled for completion in July of 2005. Redundancy and capacity of the water supply system will be increased with the completion of improvements to pumping station #8. In addition, numerous sections of aging water and sewer mains have been identified for repair or replacement over the next several years, insuring reliable service for our customers.

Rt 64 came through St. Charles 85 years ago (1920).

Aquascape Designs Corporate Headquarters Under Construction

Anticipates opening Oct. 2005!

Aquascape Designs is the largest wholesale manufacturer and supplier of its own patented pond filtration system. They are the single-leading manufacturer of complete, ready-to-assemble pond kits. Their new \$16.5 million headquarters in St. Charles will feature a 240,000 s.f. sloped grass roof that will handle the building's storm water runoff.



The new facility is on Kautz Rd, across the street from the DuPage Airport. The facility is expected to be one of the most technologically and environmentally advanced buildings in North America. Designed by Artisan Design-Build of Monroe, Wisconsin, the sloping roof will feature a prairie meadow. The green roof will serve several functions, such as cooling and insulating the building. The building's lighting and energy load is projected to be reduced by 50 percent. For more information on Aquascape Designs please visit them on the web at www.aquasapedesigns.com.

Welcome to St. Charles!

CONSTRUCTION COST INVESTMENT

	2002		2003		2004	
Construction Type	# of Permits	Estimated Cost of Construction	# of Permits	Estimated Cost of Construction	# of Permits	Estimated Cost of Construction
Residential	642	61,955,684	460	41,918,176	357	34,742,865
Commercial	172	38,767,082	195	35,308,922	167	22,337,501
Industrial	50	1,397,080	36	8,975,050	14	7,281,579
All Others	1,054	9,153,820 ¹	1,323	8,112,863 ¹	1388	21,583,106
Total	1,911	\$111,273,666	2,011	\$94,315,011	1926	\$85,945,051

¹ includes Municipal Center renovation

Another Expansion in St. Charles for Compact Industries

Since 1963, Compact has been a leading contract manufacturer of dry food products to Fortune 500 companies. The firm partners with its customers in the custom blending and contract packaging, retail, food service, office coffee service, and vending market segments to deliver quality food products. Compact's facility has the highest rating given by the American Institute of Baking and is approved by the American Sanitation Institute, both of which govern the food industry. Compact is a Kosher-certified plant, approved by numerous rabbinical councils.

Compact is currently completing a 66,000 s.f. expansion of its facility. When complete, Compact Industries will operate in a facility five times bigger than it was five years ago. The expansion will primarily accommodate storage for a variety of materials and allow for improved operating capacity, and will later require additional staffing. Occupancy is expected in early 2005. For more information, call (630) 513-9600, or visit their web site at www.compactind.com.

Police Department Services

The St. Charles Police Department offers many programs and services to make St. Charles a safe place to live and work. The Department has been a nationally accredited police agency since 1989. Through the Department's commitment and partnership with the community, the crime rate in St. Charles continues to decline each year. Crime rate is the number of criminal offenses per 100 people. In 2003, the crime rate was 11.9, a decrease in comparison to the 2000 rate of 13.8. Some of the major reductions include aggravated assault and battery cases, which dropped from 57 incidents in 2002 to 21 incidents in 2003 and burglary, which was reduced from 95 incidents in 2002 to 66 incidents in 2003. Note, information for 2004 was not available at the time of this report.

Department personnel are constantly looking for ways to improve the delivery of service and respond to crime trends within the community. Current programs that assist the business community are:

Security Surveys

The Police Department helps businesses identify potential areas of weaknesses in the overall protection of the property. Security Surveys allow officers to examine the entire building structure and discuss with property owners issues of increased safety for the

building. The surveys are free of charge and are done at the request of the property owners. To schedule a Security Survey or to receive more information, call Jeff Finley at (630) 443-3730.

Financial Identity Theft

The Police Department has partnered with Citibank to provide *Financial Identity Theft Training*. The seminars cover topics such as:

- methods in which your identity is stolen;
- how to tell when you are a victim;
- recovery steps to take;
- preventative actions to safeguard your personal information.

These seminars are available for both citizens and businesses in the St. Charles community. To schedule a seminar or to receive more information, call Sergeant Steve Huffman at (630) 443-3732.

Fraud Investigation

The Police Department, in conjunction with the Kane County State Attorney's Office, utilizes various tactics to investigate financial fraud and forgery. For more information on fraud investigation, call Sergeant Steve Huffman at (630) 443-3732.

Congratulations to the River Corridor Foundation for your IRS 501(c)(3) Status!

In 2000 the City partnered with the Downtown St. Charles Partnership and the St. Charles Park District to work with the community and complete a *Downtown Strategy Plan*.

The *Strategy Plan* recommended many long range and short term projects including two distinct projects which achieved much publicity in 2004: *The First Street Redevelopment Project* and the *River Corridor Master Plan* seek to provide coordinated, continuous pedestrian access to the river.

Congratulations to the River Corridor Foundation on becoming a tax deductible organization. To get involved in building your community, contact the Downtown St. Charles Partnership at (630) 513-5386.

How Does EDD Market St. Charles Property?

The City's EDD actively seeks to fill all commercial property in St. Charles by working closely with area brokers and property owners. The EDD advertises in targeted real estate publications, web sites and industry resource books; attends professional conferences and trade shows; and solicits businesses through correspondence and phone calls, as well as helping those that contact the EDD office.

In 2005 the City will expand its on-line searchable database for available commercial property in St. Charles. We've partnered with the State of Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity to utilize the LOIS (Location One Information System) software to market our available sites & buildings. This will allow web viewers to obtain GIS mapping, more detailed specifications about properties, and quick access to state and county data.

Available St. Charles properties can be found via the EDD web site at www.stcharlesil.gov/edd; select "Available Sites". If you don't see your St. Charles property on this site, let the EDD market your St. Charles commercial property; call (630) 443-4093.



Fire Department Services

The Fire Department has been providing the citizens of St. Charles with an ever-increasing array of sophisticated emergency services. Besides the traditional basic fire fighting for which fire departments were originally founded, the St. Charles Fire Department provides advanced Emergency Medical Services, technical rescue services (such as high angle rescue, trench rescue, and water rescue), and hazardous materials, in addition to participating in the outstanding area-wide mutual aid system. The Department also provided a wide range of prevention-related services that include public education, juvenile firesetter counseling, plan review, code enforcement, inspections, and in cooperation with the police, fire and arson investigations.

The Fire Department requests each business submit a list of three night-time telephone numbers in case of an emergency; this information should be updated at any change. The emergency contact list would be used to notify anyone of a problem or in the event the fire department must enter the premises. Contact information is verified during the regular semi-annual fire inspection.

As part of the adopted fire prevention code, the City requires a lock box system that will permit fire personnel to enter a building in the event of a fire or emergency, without using force. More information is available through the Fire Prevention Bureau at (630) 377-4457. For information on requirements to obtain occupancy of a commercial property, consult the Fire Department's "Before You Open For Business" Pamphlet.

The "Right to Know Law" requires the owner of a business to furnish the Fire Department with a list of any hazardous materials stored on the premises or used in their business processes. Information should be updated with any change, as it is important to know what firefighters may encounter in an incident.

The St. Charles Fire Department has earned a rating of "2" in the ISO's Public Protection Classification Program, which places the department in the top 1% of the state. This rating could qualify you for lower insurance rates.

For more information on the Fire Department you can visit the web site found at www.stcharlesil.gov/departments/fire/ or call the Administration Office at (630) 377-4458.

Focus on St. Charles

Focus on St. Charles is an ongoing program. Trained facilitators meet with citizens to ascertain their opinions on a variety of topics affecting the City. Eleven focus groups were held in Sept. and Oct. to discuss what the City needs to focus on in order to maintain or improve our quality of life. A total of 117 residents, youth, business owners, social service representatives, and realtors attended the focus groups and provided input.

This was the first focus group series with our new Community Facilitators. Jane Creen, Community Facilitator and other topic coordinators presented the results of the focus groups to the Government Operations Committee of the City Council on Nov. 1st. Results were also discussed at the Nov. 6th City Council retreat, when elected officials and department directors gathered to discuss long-term plans and priorities. The results have also been distributed to the School, Park, and Library Districts for review. Additional follow-up on actions stemming from these focus groups will be included in future issues of *The City Grapevine* newsletter.

Contact the City Administrator's Office at (630) 377-4422 or via e-mail at skemph@stcharlesil.gov with questions or for more information on the *Focus on St. Charles* Program.

Technology and Service are Key to Business Growth at the Q Center

The Q Center (1405 N. 5th Ave/Rt 25) enjoyed a strong 2004! The contemporary conference commons is proving to be a popular destination for meetings, training, and business functions with 112 flexible meeting rooms that total 110,000 s.f. Organizations from the local area and Chicagoland plus multi-nationals continue to bring their employees to St. Charles for meetings ranging from 1-14 days.

The Q Center has distinguished itself amongst conference centers and hotels by offering the most extensive technology and support. In addition to their many facility upgrades in 2004, they added to its high-speed Internet capacity, bringing the available bandwidth to more than T3 speeds. This provides QCenter's clients with additional speed and reliability for Internet connectivity. For more information call (630) 377-3100 or visit www.qcenter.com.

Congratulations Q Center on your many upgrades in 2004!

No. of Requests for Information Received by EDD

Year	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Total	313	338	467	588	455

Inquiries by Land Use	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Automotive related businesses	6	10	20	17	13
Bank Locations	4	3	5	9	3
Housing	11	6	11	18	10
Industrial/Warehousing	43	32	64	113	90
Mixed Use Projects	0	16	17	16	21
Office	33	25	24	50	58
Restaurants	33	28	46	54	32
Retail	87	46	130	220	170
Service	10	8	14	18	16
Special	12	17	15	19	13
Unknown Use	14	23	13	11	29
Total	253	214	359	545	455



Auto Dealerships Invested Over \$3 Million in St. Charles in 2004!

This year the City's auto dealership community made significant investments in property improvements, totaling **\$3,478,900**. These dealerships are a regional draw of consumers to our community and are a valuable asset. Revenues from these and other retail businesses enable the City to provide excellent services to the community. The City thanks these dealerships for strengthening their customer base and image. We want to recognize the dealerships' investment and commitment, as we welcome St. Charles Cadillac. When you are thinking about your next vehicle purchase, please consider these St. Charles dealerships:

Nissan of St. Charles

Fastest growing Nissan Dealer in Chicago market!

In 1990, partners Fred Vargason and Dennis Alf opened a Pontiac/Buick dealership in St. Charles next to Zimmerman Ford, later purchasing St. Charles Toyota. In 2001, the decision was made for Dennis to take the Toyota flag and Fred, the Pontiac/Buick business so that family members could enter the business. More change occurred in 2001 when Fred traded dealerships with Gary McGrath, and took over operation of Nissan of St. Charles!

The change has been exciting — they are the fastest growing Nissan dealership in Chicagoland with a 175% increase in sales over last year. They pride themselves on excellent employees who possess a strong work ethic and commitment. Their line of new products is continuously being advanced, for example watch for the Titan diesel dual rear wheel vehicle which is expected to be on the market soon.

Renovations to bring them into the 2000 Millennium required an investment by the manufacturer and dealership in excess of \$1 million. The service department was expanded to include enclosed write-up and reception areas, and the showroom was updated from 1964 to 2004 amenities. For more information, call (630) 584-3900 or visit www.nissanofstcharles.com.

**184 combined years
serving St. Charles!**

Don McCue Chevrolet

Largest dealership in the Fox Valley!

In Oct. 1980, Don McCue Chevrolet opened in St. Charles. Since then, they have been a successful dealership and take pride in showcasing the quality of the Chevrolet brand. Four new Chevy models will arrive in 2005. From cars and trucks to commercial vehicles and vans, stop by McCue in 2005 and help the dealership celebrate its 25th Anniversary. They are the largest dealership in the Fox Valley area and one of the top dealerships in the Chicago market for both volume and customer satisfaction ratings. For more information, call (630) 584-9700 or visit www.donmccuechevrolet.com.

Richard Chrysler Jeep

Expansion has allowed a 250% increase in inventory!

Richard Chrysler Jeep has been in St. Charles for 27 years and has been family owned and operated from the start. This dealership has evolved its brand image from an original Buick dealership to a combined Chrysler and Jeep dealer. They pride themselves on their variety of services, such as lifetime oil changes for new cars and its fleet of rental cars. They are also proud and honored to be sponsors for local events. In addition, the dealership's retention of good employees allows customers to feel appreciated and satisfied; the average tenure of an employee is 15 years.

In 2004, \$600,000 was spent on remodeling (with another \$700,000 planned for 2005). This allowed for a new display lot of 3 acres of parking (280 additional parking spaces to showcase cars). Richard Chrysler is a 5-Star Dealership and rated at 98% in customer satisfaction (industry standard for 5-Star rating is 93%). They are open on Sat. and weekday evenings for service. For more information, call (630) 584-0031 or visit www.richardcars.com.

St. Charles Toyota

New Entrance and Landscaping planned for 2005!

In 1990, partners Fred Vargason and Dennis Alf opened a Pontiac/Buick dealership in St. Charles next to Zimmerman Ford, later purchasing St. Charles Toyota. Now owned and operated exclusively by the Alf family, St. Charles Toyota features the Toyota and Scion brands. They pride themselves on exceeding customers' expectations. The preferred customer program gives discounts on parts, labor, and services, complimentary shuttle, free wash and vacuum when a vehicle is serviced.

Toyota is one of the only manufacturers with increasing sales! New car sales are up 40% for this year. Camry is the #1 car in America and Corolla is #1 in the world as far as number of vehicles sold. St. Charles Toyota was recently awarded the *Presidents Award* - Toyota's highest honor, which recognizes the excellence in all departments: sales, service, parts, and customer relations and satisfaction.

Recent improvements include a tunnel car wash for customers, and expanded the service area (8 additional bays). Sales hours have been extended from 7-9pm on weekdays, and 8am to 3pm on Sat.

In the next three years, St. Charles Toyota will give the dealership a 'facelift' and expand the building. Planning is underway to include more amenities, such as Internet access in the customer lounge, which already offers a customer work area, complimentary Starbucks coffee and snacks, in addition to a kids play area. For more information, call (630) 584-6655 or visit www.toyota.net.

St. Charles Cadillac

Anticipated opening March 2005!

Owner Al Piemonte has been in the car dealership business for 39 years and is pleased to relocate St. Charles Cadillac to our community. Owners include St. Charles resident Todd O'Reilly. The new state-of-the-art facility in their new location, and will carry an extensive variety of parts and offer numerous services that cannot be found anywhere else in the Chicagoland area. The knowledge and experience of the sales associates will be of the highest quality.

The City assisted with Cadillac's decision to relocate in St. Charles through the creation of a Tax Increment Finance Districts (TIF). TIF funds were used to demolish the long vacant St. Charles Manufacturing plant, re-grade the site, and the creation of a regional stormwater detention pond designed to help existing neighborhoods with water drainage. Welcome to St. Charles! We look forward to your grand opening.

Frontier Dodge

Frontier Dodge has been in St. Charles since Feb. of 2002. The dealership sells Dodge cars and trucks and also showcases pre-owned vehicles. They pride themselves on providing excellent customer service and appreciation and offers opportunities, such as rental cars and free lifetime car washes. Future plans include a possible new dealership. For more information on Frontier Dodge, call (630) 584-0300 or www.frontier-dodge.com.

Prestige Imports

Anticipates opening in February 2005!

Prestige Imports will be located at 333 N. Randall Rd (SW corner Randall Rd and Dean St.) and will feature pre-owned European & Japanese luxury and performance vehicles. The dealership showcases performance cars at affordable prices. They plan to open with 15-20 cars and increase their inventory to 40-50 as soon as possible. For more information, call (630) 584-9616 or visit www.prestigeimportsonline.com

Zimmerman Ford

74 Years in St. Charles!

This dealership has been in St. Charles for 74 years and known as Zimmerman Ford for 47 years. They feature Ford cars and trucks and pride themselves on the longevity of quality employees — with an average tenure of approximately 20 years! Their plans for the future include the implementation of "Quick Lane," a separate Ford franchise, which will introduce a completely different service area for oil changes, tires, brakes, and other regular maintenance. *Quick Lane* will be on the south end of the current service department and will require an internal remodel for new lifts, separate waiting area, and modified bays. The project is estimated to begin in early 2005.

Recent renovations at this dealership included remodeling of the interior show room & exterior facade, which was finished in July 2004. In addition, the building behind the dealership was remodeled for a service department specializing in heavy-duty trucks and RV maintenance. This new service department opened in Sept. 2004. Approximately \$1.5 million was invested for remodeling. For more information call (630) 584-1800 or www.zimmermanford.com.

Dan Nigri Lincoln Mercury

Since 1990, Dan Nigri has been selling Lincoln and Mercury cars in St. Charles. The dealership has also featured other car brands, such as Suzuki. Dan Nigri Lincoln Mercury prides itself on providing the lowest price with the best service. The dealership firmly believes that low pricing and excellent customer service will result not only in customer satisfaction, but also repetition for future car purchases.

Dan Nigri Lincoln Mercury has award winning and certified technicians, whom were ranked in the top 3^d nationally. Dan Nigri Lincoln Mercury was recognized as #1 in the four state region for the most sales in the month of Dec. 2004. The dealership is currently in the concept planning phase for remodeling the showroom and service area. For more information on Dan Nigri Lincoln Mercury, call (630) 584-6200 or visit www.dannigri.com.

McGrath Honda

Received Honda's President Award

McGrath Honda has been selling Honda and certified pre-owned vehicles in St. Charles for 15 years. They pride themselves on customer service and receiving the Honda President Award in 2002 and 2003. This distinguished award recognizes excellence in various areas, such as customer service, sales volume, and dealership appearance.

McGrath Honda's facility is 3-years-old and is modeled after Honda's exclusive design forum. McGrath Honda is excited to announce its upcoming arrival of Honda's first full-size pick-up truck, the Ridgeline. The Ridgeline has car like features, is built off of the Honda Pilot platform and, its truckbed is designed to carry Honda's 2 largest off-road ATV's. Look for the arrival of the Ridgeline at McGrath Honda in March 2005.

McGrath Honda is also proud to feature the re-designed Odyssey for 2005. This is the first vehicle that is designed for safety for everyone. The re-designed Odyssey meets and exceeds all federal standards for safety. McGrath Honda is a proud sponsor of local events and believes in giving back to the St. Charles community. For more information, please contact them at (630) 443-6400 or www.mcgrathautomotivegroup.com.

McGrath GMC Pontiac Oldsmobile

For 15 years, McGrath GMC Pontiac Oldsmobile has been located in St. Charles. They feature a wide variety of GMC, Pontiac, Buick, and certified used vehicles. The dealership prides itself on having the best inventory in the Midwest region. McGrath GMC Pontiac Oldsmobile upholds a standard of excellence at their dealership by providing exceptional customer service and great savings on vehicles. Continue to look for new makes and models of GMC, Pontiac, and Buick that will be coming next year. McGrath GMC Pontiac Oldsmobile can be reached at (630) 584-6400.

Dopaco Celebrates 25 Years of Operation

In Aug., Dopaco, Inc. celebrated its 25th Anniversary. Dopaco is a manufacturer of packaging products used by the fast food service industry. In 1985, Dopaco established a plant in St. Charles to respond to the growing demand of the fast food industry. This plant allows Dopaco to serve the Midwest market and contributes to the company's capabilities to provide nationwide services to its customers. The St. Charles operation went through significant growth as the business developed, which resulted in several expansions that were completed in 1996 with the construction of a warehouse connected to the main plant. Dopaco's facility, located at 315 S. Kirk Rd, contains 300,000 s.f. of manufacturing equipment and warehousing. The company employs 220 from surrounding communities, utilizes local suppliers to maintain its manufacturing processes, and makes significant contributions to the local economy. For more information, call (630) 377-6880 or visit the company's web site at www.dopaco.com.

Enjoying one of St. Charles 100+ restaurants? Don't forget to see a movie!

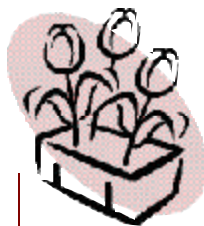
Congratulations to Classic Cinemas 18 at the Charlestowne Mall, now ranked 23rd in the Chicagoland market! Schedule parties or just see a show after shopping the beautiful Charlestowne Mall; see www.classiccinemas.com for show times.

Positive First Impressions: The Business Benefits of Landscaping

The Corridor Improvement Commission (CIC) was formed in Jan. of 2000 to administer the *Corridor Improvement Grant Program* aimed at improving private property on the City's most visible corridors: Randall Rd, Main St, and Kirk Rd. In July of 2004, the CIC sponsored a Community Landscaping Symposium, *Positive First Impressions: How to Captivate Customers Through Landscaping*.

Attendees learned why landscaping is important and the financial benefits to commercial property and business owners. Did you know that consumers are willing to pay 12% more for goods purchased in a well-landscaped environment?

Attractive landscaping not only enhances the beauty, character, and pride of a community, but it also provides businesses with a multitude of important benefits, such as image, property value, energy costs, work productivity, and safety.



Nineteen Main Street businesses participated in the Flower Box Beautification Program this year, resulting in the installation of 23 four-season flower boxes. Thanks for beautifying St. Charles!



CIC Landscaping Symposium

Local resources were introduced by Edith Makra of Morton Arboretum, and Barbara Bates, University of Illinois Cooperative Extension Program. Our thanks to other presenters: John Maguire of Long Grove Community Development, Scott Palese of Chili's Bar & Grill, and Mark Coleman of Coleman Land Company. For a summary of landscaping benefits or for more information about the Corridor Improvement Program, contact the EDD at (630) 443-4093.

A Special Thanks

Our thanks to **Midwest Groundcovers** who donated plant materials at various locations throughout the City and **Pedersen Landscaping Company** for donation of the labor to install these beautification projects.

Business Call Meetings are Important to the City's Business Retention Program

As part of the City's ongoing Business Retention Program, the EDD coordinates monthly meetings with St. Charles businesses to allow for an informal exchange of ideas between the business community and the City in an informal setting. Community updates are provided to attendees. If you are a St. Charles business and interested in hosting a meeting contact the EDD at (630) 443-4093. Watch for a meeting in your area!

Thanks to the following businesses for hosting a Business Call Meeting in 2004:

- Batavia Enterprises
- Bistro Thai Restaurant
- Citibank
- Delnor Glenn Assisted Living
- Foxfield Realty
- KaBloom of St. Charles
- Marshall Architects
- Omron Manufacturing
- Private Bank & Trust
- Rookies (relocated from Grimm's Hallmark West due to high attendance)
- Warwick Publishing Co.

First Street

The First Street Redevelopment Project is an opportunity to create a unified development area where traffic can be controlled, parking will be plentiful, and businesses will be grouped and mixed to support each other. The goal is a new set of unique shops, restaurants, offices, and residences in a landscaped environment geared toward a pedestrian friendly, extraordinarily pleasant and attractive shopping/dining area.

The First Street project was first conceived of in the Downtown Strategy Plan which was completed in 2000. Creation of design guidelines for First Street were overseen by a citizens committee in 2002. The River Corridor Master Plan, completed in 2002, acts as an overlay on all downtown projects - the river corridor planning goals will be achieved on First Street.

Elements of the project:

- An expansive public plaza area (approximately one-half acre) will be located behind the Main Street buildings and extend all the way to the river.
- A 580-car public parking garage will be constructed.
- Retail, office and residential uses will total 270,000 s.f.
- The riverfront will be open to pedestrian traffic from Main St to the Blue Goose property.
- The streetscape will be greatly improved.

- First Street right-of-way will be widened for diagonal, on-street parking.
- An arched pedestrian walkway over First Street will create a gateway and link the buildings on the east side of First Street to the parking deck.
- The project integrates new architecture that honors the past while reflecting St. Charles as a progressive and vibrant community.

First Street is the largest redevelopment project ever to be undertaken in the City. This project began with the establishment of a Business District and a Tax Increment Finance (TIF) District. When the project is completed, the value of all the properties within the TIF District will be substantially greater than what is currently within the district. Property taxes will continue to be levied as they are now - there is no additional tax to be levied. But the incremental taxes generated from the new development value will be used to pay off bonds which have been borrowed to finance public improvements in the TIF district. This includes infrastructure, public plazas, and the river walk.



Feb. 2004 Merger: Moore Wallace & RR Donnelley

Originally locating in St. Charles as Wallace Computer, Moore Wallace has since merged with RR Donnelley Co. and continues to operate two St. Charles facilities: one is a business communications service and distribution operation, and the other is a label printing facility. RR Donnelley Co. is the world's premier full-service global print provider and the largest printing company in North America, serving customers in publishing, healthcare, advertising, retail, technology, financial services, and many other industries. Founded 140 years ago, RR Donnelley Co. provides solutions in commercial printing, forms and labels, direct mail, financial printing, print fulfillment, business communication outsourcing, logistics, online services, digital photography, and content and database management. For more information, call (630) 443-3626, or visit the company's web site at www.rrdonnelley.com.

Property acquisition continues. Purchased in 2004 were 201 S First St and 5 S First St; the office building at 102 Illinois was demolished.

In 2005 the City hopes to execute a Redevelopment Agreement which spells out the terms of the developer's and the City's obligations for improvements. Work also continues on Planning and Zoning work and the Final Design and permitting (engineering and architecture) as the project is under review by City Commissions and Advisory Boards.

The River Corridor Foundation received their 501C3 designations from the IRS and will continue to seek public donations to achieve the dream of a continuing our river walk by connecting all areas of downtown. Both the River Corridor and First Street Projects originated from the 2000 Downtown Strategy Plan. This plan and updates on all downtown news can be found at www.stcharlesil.gov/news.

2004 Investment in Alterations and Additions to Existing Buildings				
Use Type	East Gateway	Downtown	West Gateway	Total
Bank	\$330,150	\$414,360	\$121,700	\$866,210
Industrial-Whse	\$2,714,775	\$1,000	\$170,200	\$2,885,975
Office	\$417,575	\$287,571	\$1,793,897	\$2,499,043
Recreation	\$0	\$38,000	\$72,000	\$110,000
Restaurant	\$231,450	\$92,857	\$485,750	\$810,057
Retail	\$2,730,586	\$133,240	\$955,645	\$3,819,471
School	\$18,800	\$3,000	\$225,000	\$246,800
Service	\$392,740	\$474,810	\$114,533	\$982,083
TOTAL	\$6,836,076	\$1,444,838	\$3,938,725	\$12,219,639

Another Expansion for Wine Sergi & Co.

For 80 years, Wine Sergi & Co, LLC has built a reputation for providing local businesses insurance services such as personal home and auto, group health, business insurance, 401K and highly-sophisticated risk management and loss control for a diverse clientele in the Fox Valley area, and throughout the US. With a staff of over 75, Wine Sergi & Co. and its subsidiaries boast a total insurance sales volume of over \$120 million. This year the agency was ranked as the 20th largest insurance ~~broker in Illinois~~ *by* *Inc.* *Magazine's Business* due to their extensive services offered.

To continue meeting all the insurance and risk management needs of their clients, Wine Sergi & Co. created *Insurance Program Managers Group (IPMG) LLC*, *ClaimsOne LLC*, and *Method Management, Inc.*

- *IPMG LLC* is a business insurance wholesale broker and manages the general agent focus on the marketing and administration of industry specific insurance and risk management.
- *ClaimsOne LLC* is a third party claims handler whose beginning resulted from the need for complete program management and administration.
- *Method Management, Inc.* identifies, analyzes, develops, and assists in the implementation of the proactive strategies that comprise each essential risk management component.

With this growth, Wine Sergi & Co. is planning construction of a new building on Smith Rd. For more information, call (630) 513-6600 or visit the company's web site at www.winesergi.com.

Congratulations on your expansion!

Taking a Step Back...How Far we Have Come!

1998 - Significant Growth in Service Sector

Major Construction Projects: Rosewood Care Center, Delnor Assisted Living, Brighton Gardens by Marriot, and Carriage Oaks Senior Residential Care. Construction of the Marriot Courtyard and Hilton Garden Inn begins. Jewel-Osco (east side) and American National Bank also began construction.

Significant Openings: Country Inn and Suites, as well as the newly renovated Holiday Inn Express. Many restaurants opened their doors including: Armand's, El Puente Billy Biru's, Bud's Place, Chang Jiang Buffet, Fontano's, Francesca's, El Puente and McNally's.

1999 - Retail/Restaurant Industry Most Noticable

Major Construction Projects: New office condos at 555 S. Randall Rd. Renovations and additions were completed at Foxfield Theatre, Delnor Senior Housing, Robart Manufacturing, Olive Garden, and Arthur Andersen. Downtown, work began on the 4 story Century Station building, PrivateBank Corp, Dearborne House and the St. Charles Public Library.

Significant Openings: Meijer, Jewel-Osco (east side), Regal 18-Screen Cinema, Hilton Garden Inn and Courtyard by Marriott, West Suburban Bank, Jiffy Lube, Snap Edge, and Smurfit Stone Container.

2000 - East Gateway Retail Develops

Major Construction Projects: Several multi-unit retail complexes were developed in the East Gateway and are now home to a variety of businesses. Pheasant Run began renovations on its ballroom. In the West Gateway, Meijer completed construction and opened their gas station, while Dominick's began renovations. Several businesses in the West Gateway completed renovations or additions.

Continued on page 14

Top 20 Investments in St. Charles for 2004:

Cost of Construction	Square Feet	Business Name	Business Address
\$2,501,000	20870	Cadillac of St. Charles	1611 E. Main St
\$2,475,000	60000	Charlestown Power Equipment	3945 Swenson Ave
\$2,300,000	76649	American Small Business	761 N 16th St
\$2,150,000	32050	Tyler & IL Rt. 64/ Main St Business Park	1607 E. Main St
\$1,909,278	66293	Compact Industries	3945 Ohio Ave
\$1,506,800	37643	Courtyards of St. Charles	453 Dunham Rd
\$1,500,000	6600	Benchmark Bank	3341 W. Main St
\$1,500,000	10000	Tri-Com Central Dispatch	3823 Tri-Com Ct
\$1,232,204	36800	Sidwell Ct - Lot 3	602 Sidwell Ct
\$1,150,000	10716	Wal-Mart	150 Smith Rd
\$905,800	8032	Goddard School	200 N Tyler Rd
\$900,000	9545	Suburban Tire Auto Care Centers	1900 Bricher Rd
\$671,690	11412	Elgin Financial Service (EFS) Bank	2019 Dean St
\$600,000	22250	Fox Valley Pools	1820 Production Dr
\$560,000	21000	Garden 6 Joint Venture	1515 Wallace Ave
\$530,700	6923	Heritage Square	405 Illinois Ave
\$524,500	18440	Scholastic	2315 Dean St
\$518,000	724	Harris Bank	300 S Randall Rd
\$405,000	3091	Taco Bell	1950 Bricher Rd

Live well, learn often!

St. Charles is not only a great place to live, work, shop, and visit but also offers many opportunities for learning. In the past year, there has been an increase in the number of recreational and vocational training facilities available:

Career Academy Nail Technology opened at 2460 W. Main St. (St. Charles Mercantile Building). They offer 350-hour nail technology classes as required by the State of Illinois. Both day and evening full-time and part-time classes are available; the first class enrollment will begin mid Jan. 2005; call (630) 513-1564 or www.nailtechschool.com.

Cyndirella's Academy of Style & Beauty opened at 1301 E. Main. They offer 1500-hour cosmetology classes as required by the State of Illinois. The academy has begun to collaborate with area St. Charles businesses that compliment the services they offer in order to provide a good foundation for their students. Both full and part time classes are available M-F. For enrollment or more information call (630) 443-9200.

The Cottage Stamper is new to St. Charles at 211 S. 3rd St (former Wool & Company location). They are a retailer of rubber stamps and offer a wide selection of stamps, paper, and accessories. Classes are available for beginners or experienced stampers and embossers. For more information call (630) 584-1329 or via the web at www.thecottagestamper.com.

Creative Sewing is coming soon to 3873 E. Main St (next to SuperTarget). In addition to a full service sewing store, they will offer creative classes in the fields of quilting, heirloom sewing, embroidery,

home décor, beginning sewing, and more. They will offer sewing software to create embroidery designs and provide classes to help learn the software. For more information on Creative Sewing, visit their website at www.creativesewing.biz.

Drive Now! Teen Driving School opened in the fall of 2004 and offers Driver Education Classes. They are located at 303 N. 2nd St and offer both classroom and behind the wheel training. For more information call (630) 513-5487 or www.drivenowdriving.school.com.

Excel Baseball Training Center opened at 1500 Foundry. They are the premier provider of quality training services for baseball and softball players of all ages and coaches. For more information on individual and group

instruction, camps, and clinics, call (630) 587-9235 or www.excelbaseball.com.

Today's Catch is now open at 311 N 2nd St, (Charleston Center), selling fresh seafood and utensils. Like Prairie Gourmet at 113 W. Main St, culinary classes are available. Today's Catch can be reached at (630) 444-0168. Prairie Gourmet can be reached at (630) 443-9904.

Congratulations to **Bridges Montessori** (1713 Howard) on their expansion, and welcome to the new **Goddard School** (under construction at 200 N Tyler).

Other Educational Opportunities in St. Charles:

- ✓ 3rd Street Dance and Theatre Academy
- ✓ American Red Cross - Fox Valley
- ✓ Bill Cho's National Tae Kwon Do
- ✓ Butterfly Turtle Gallery
- ✓ Cedar House Music, Inc.
- ✓ Coffee Drop Shop
- ✓ Copeland Dance Academy
- ✓ Dance Beat II
- ✓ Delnor Community Education
- ✓ Therapy Lab, Ltd
- ✓ Full Staff Music
- ✓ Heinz Brothers Greenhouse & Garden Center
- ✓ Home Brew Shop
- ✓ Indigo School of Art and Gallery
- ✓ Kumon Math and Reading Center
- ✓ Life Journeys
- ✓ Lynne Greens School of Flute
- ✓ Needle Things for Little People
- ✓ Northern Illinois Cheer Academy
- ✓ Pottawatomie Community Center
- ✓ Prana Yoga Center
- ✓ Spill the Beads
- ✓ Sportsplex of St. Charles
- ✓ St. Charles Gymnastic Club
- ✓ St. Charles Park District
- ✓ St. Charles School of Dance
- ✓ Steel Beam Theatre
- ✓ Sylvan Learning Center
- ✓ Tai Chi Chuan Shaolin Chuan
- ✓ The Scrap Shack
- ✓ Tony and Friends Art Studio
- ✓ Traditional Martial Arts
- ✓ University of Illinois Extension-Kane County

For information on these and other St. Charles businesses, visit EDD's Business Listing Guide at www.stcharlesil.gov/edd/business_listings.

**IT
ALL
ADDS
UP!**

**THINK
LOCAL!**

Distinctive,
one-of-a-kind
businesses

+

**BUY
LOCAL!**

Contribute to the overall welfare
of the business community
& support services offered by the City
that benefit the community

=

**BE
LOCAL!**

Enjoy a strong and
vibrant community!

Charlestown Power Equipment – Committed to St. Charles

Charlestown Power Equipment (CPE) is the Midwest's largest distributor of Echo hand held power products. Formed in 1996, CPE evolved from a Chicagoland Toro Distributorship and subsequently fell under the ownership of Echo, Inc. CPE has four outdoor power equipment manufacturers it distributes for. Their products are used by professional landscapers and consumers alike.

After operating in multiple locations, CPE's latest commitment to St. Charles came this year as they built a new 60,000 s.f. distribution facility, doubling their size. The move, which occurred in Dec. 2004 into the new state-of-the art facility allows CPE to stay in the desirable St. Charles Business Park where they will continue to enjoy the advantages this St. Charles location offers, such as, access to major highways and proximity to a wide variety of vendors and upscale amenities. Currently, CPE employs 40, with 25 employees on site. For more information, call (630) 513-0800. Congratulations on your new location!

Taking a Step Back...How Far we Have Come!

Continued from page 12

(2000) Significant Openings: Jared Jewelry, Bennigan's, Panera Bread, On the Border, Sweet Tomatoes, Smitty's on the Corner, Marriot Fairfield, Stein Mart, Borders, Cost Plus Market, and Hertz Rental Car. The Salvation Army opened a new facility on 7th Ave.

2001 – Industrial Development is a Focus

Major Construction Projects: In the St. Charles Business Park, nearly 140,000 s.f. of industrial space was added. National Data and Steiner Electric both completed major renovations. In the downtown area, renovations and additions accounted for most of the construction costs. The St. Charles Public Library, Free Methodist Church, Andersen Worldwide, west side Post Office, and Destinations (former Old Church Inn) all completed renovations.

Significant Openings: Von Maur, Chesterbrook Academy, Old Second National Bank, DSS Corp, and Display Network, St. Charles Sportsplex, Walgreens, Krispy Kreme, IHOP, Wendy's, Miguel's on the Fox, and Steel Beam Theatre. Several multi-unit retail and office complexes also opened.

2002 – Retail Activity is Strong

Major Construction Projects: Pheasant Run began renovations of Bourbon Street and the Noble Fool Theatre. Lowe's began construction of its first store in the Chicago market. The St. Charles Recreation Center and the St. Charles Free Methodist Church both constructed additions. Renovations occurred at Chord on Blues, Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Thirsty Fox, and El Puente. On the east side construction began for TGI Friday's, Portillos, and a ten-unit retail building at Main Street Commons. Renovations were completed at the Kane County Clerk's Office.

Significant Openings: SuperTarget (the first in Illinois), Portillos, Fox Coffee Bar, Mid America Bank, Amcore Bank, Zales, EmboidMe, Sam Goody, and Wall of Fame. Additionally, nine new stores opened in Charlestown Mall. The East Gateway industrial sector saw the addition of Creative Concepts.

2003 – Office and Industrial at the Forefront

Major Construction Projects: Construction began on Oak Brook and LaSalle banks. Over \$8 million was spent in the industrial sector, 10 times the previous year! This included many small projects as well as ConAgra Foods, Coates Screen, H.A. Phillips, and Omron Manufacturing who expanded significantly. Multi-tenant buildings were constructed on Wallace Ave, and ten more units were added in Phase-two on Sidwell Ct. Zimmerman Ford also invested heavily in renovations. The St. Charles Country Club, Q Center, Michael Dohan, D.D.S., Express Title and Steel Beam Theatre all completed renovations or expansions.

Significant Openings: Lowe's Home Improvement, Hotel Baker reopening, Rotisserie Grill, Noble Fool Theatre, Charter One and National City Banks, Factory Card Outlet, Hometown Storage, Heritage Square II, Dick Pond Athletics, Bistro Thai, Baba Foods, Ragamuffin Coffee House, and 18 North (now 18 Esperienza).

2005 Employment Law FAQ for Illinois Employers

Should my business implement the new minimum wage?

Minimum hourly wage for Illinois employees, 18 years of age and over, increased to \$6.50 effective Jan. 1, 2005 from its previous level of \$5.50 per hour. The federal minimum wage remains at \$5.15. Each state has the option to set a higher minimum than the federal standard, so if you have multi-state operations you should check each state's department of labor for possible changes to their minimum wage. For more minimum wage information, visit the State of Illinois website at www.state.il.us/agency/idol/index.htm.

Is my business in compliance with the new overtime (OT) regulations?

Much was written in 2004 about how Illinois employers need not comply with the new federal regulations because the General Assembly voted to "opt out" of the federal requirements. This is not true. The new OT regulations and the amended Illinois Minimum Wage Act imposes new burdens on employers. Ignore them at your peril. Employees earning less than \$455 per week, regardless of job duties, are eligible for OT at time and a half for all hours in excess of 40 in a work week. Employers must also review duties for workers in jobs requiring the exercise of discretion and judgment to see if they need to be reclassified to hourly or exempt status.

For more business assistance information, visit the State of Illinois website at www.illinois.gov/businesscenter.

7-Year Accomplishments Summary!

Mayor Susan Klinkhamer and the City Council have led the City's efforts to embrace a culture of problem solving and customer service. We were recognized for our efforts in 2003 when the City received the Bronze Lincoln Award for continuous improvement (similar to the Baldrige Award for excellence). This builds on past accomplishments. For example, did you know the Finance Department has received the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report Award from the Government Finance Officers Association for 18 straight years? Or, that our Fire Department has achieved an ISO rating of "2." Only 2% of municipalities nationwide receive the GFOA award and the Fire Department's ranking puts them in the state's top 1%. The St. Charles Police Department is CALEA certified. The Public Works Department has received numerous awards for exemplary projects over the years; plaques and certificates are hanging in the hallways outside the City Council Chambers for all to view.

City staff pride themselves on delivering exceptional service and efficient operations. To see a full listing of City services, check <http://www.stcharlesil.gov/toc/alpha.html>. Please let us know what your needs are so that we can continue to meet the needs of our residents and businesses. The City's main switchboard is (630) 377-4400. Here is a summary of accomplishments in the past 7 years:

Negotiated Key Annexations

that resulted in construction of Meijer, Lowe's, Moline Foundry Park, Shanahan Industrial Park & Aquascape, and Stuart's Crossing.

Enhanced City Operations

- Electronic records management
- Added Community Restitution Officer
- Created new commissions:
 - Senior Services Commission
 - Corridor Improvement Commission

Lasting Infrastructure

- Expanded Sewer and Water Plants
- New Electric Substations
- Downtown east side parking garage
- Renovation of City Hall
- Expanded Fire Station # 1

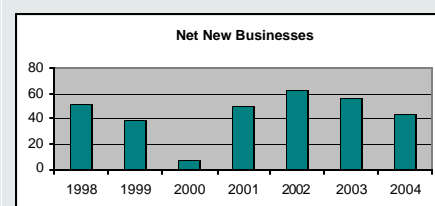
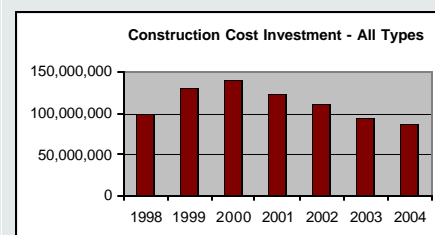
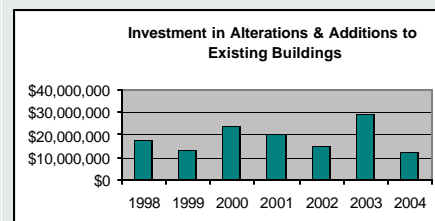
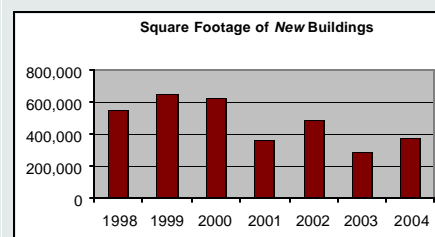
Fostering a Competitive Business Climate

with reduced building permit time and innovative programming resulting in:

- Re-opening of Hotel Baker
- Moline Foundry Business Park (8 buildings; 390,000 s.f.)
- St. Charles Cadillac Dealership and 49,000 s.f. of condominium office
- Demolition of the blighted St. Charles Mall
- 25 historic downtown building facades improved since 2000

Amended the East Gateway Comprehensive Plan

resulting in Von Maur, Main Street and East Gate Commons Shopping Centers.



Provided Flexible Zoning

Requirements for unique mixed use redevelopment projects at:

- 2000 W. Main (Awesome & others)
- Heritage Square I & II
- Brownstone at former Piano Factory
- Former Home Hardware on W. Main
- Former Boynter Products (SEC Dean & Randall)

Implemented Full-Service Code Enforcement Function

including Administrative Adjudication.

Improved Customer Service

- Development of Business Retention Program
- Received the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report award all years
- New Electric Substations
- Implemented use of technology in Human Resources
- Automated Police Operations
- Process Improvement Teams
- Service Essentials Program
- Expanded evening office hours for utility bills and building permits
- Focus on St. Charles Program
- SMILE Supervisor Training Program
- Fiber Interconnect for City facilities
- Employer Assisted Housing Initiative
- Enhanced access to information via the City web site

**City of St. Charles, Illinois -
Economic Activity**

Economic Development Dept.
2 East Main Street
St. Charles, IL 60174
Phone: (630) 443-4093
Fax: (630) 377-4062



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**City of St. Charles -
Economic Development
Department**

Mission Statement:

To create a business-friendly environment so that existing businesses will choose to remain and new businesses will locate in St. Charles, thereby creating a variety of goods and services for residents and businesses and ensuring the City maintains a balanced tax base that creates sufficient revenue to provide for City services.

Your Link to a Greater St. Charles: www.stcharlesil.gov

Access the City's website for this information and more:

- Annual Report
- Available Properties
- Building Permits & Applications
- Business Licenses & Regulations
- Business Listings
- Business Resource Guide
- City Administration & Departments
- City News-Newsflashes, Grapevine, Newsletters
- Community Demographics & Statistics
- Community Website
- Contact Information for City Officials and Employees
- Corridor Improvement Grant Program
- Council Decisions
- Demographics & Statistics
- Downtown Strategy Plan
- Employment Resources for Employers
- Fire Prevention Code
- Focus Groups
- Links to State and Local Government Offices
- Municipal Codes
- Public Meetings
- Sales Tax Information
- Shopping Center Directory
- Special Projects
- Surveys
- Tax Structures
- Traffic Counts
- Upcoming Projects - 1st Street Redevelopment, Grand Openings of Businesses
- Utility Bills
- Zoning Ordinance Updates

